

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-5 and 7 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicant cancels claim 6 and adds claim 7 by way of this Amendment.

Claim 1 is objected to. Applicant amends the claims to remove any ambiguities.

In addition, Applicant amends the specification to correct minor errors.

Claims 1 and 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wegner (6,082,158).

Analysis

In response to the Examiner's comments in the outstanding Office Action, Applicant amends claim 1 to clarify (1) the first and second positions refer to the positions of the front end of the lever; (2) such positions correspond to locked and unlocked positions of a locking member; (3) the protrusion moves between a first and second halting position which are located at opposite ends of an allowing means, which correspond to the first and second positions of the lever, and (4) the protrusion always stops at one of the halting positions.

Wegner fails to teach or suggest that the back end of the lever 38 is engaged with a locking member; rather it is engageable with a door handle.

Wegner fails to teach or suggest a first halting position and a second halting position of the allowing means. The alleged allowing means 34 does allow for the protrusion 37 to move all the way between the opposite ends of the path. Moreover, even if one were to argue that the protrusion can move between opposite ends of the path 34, there is no teaching or suggestion that

the protrusion 37 is capable of this sweeping movement without operation of the motor. In fact, it appears that the protrusion 37 is only capable of a limited vertical movement prompted by the actuation of the door handle via the lever 38.

In view of the foregoing, Wegner fails to provide the structure which allows for the movement of the lever in the novel manner of the claimed invention according to amended claim 1.

The remaining rejections are directed to the dependent claims. These claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, by virtue of their dependency therefrom.

Still further, new claim 7 more clearly recites the structure of the allowing means. Wegner fails to teach or suggest that the shaft 39 is the center of the arc of the path 34.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 CFR 1.114(c)
U.S. Application No. 10/720,140

Q78533

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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